



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|--|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/812,927 | 03/31/2004 | Christopher J. Dillon | 032304-6 | 5677 |
| 22204 | 7590 | 02/11/2005 | EXAMINER | |
| NIXON PEABODY, LLP 401 9TH STREET, NW SUITE 900 WASHINGTON, DC 20004-2128 | | | GUSHI, ROSS N | |
| | | ART UNIT | | PAPER NUMBER |
| | | | | 2833 |

DATE MAILED: 02/11/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) |
| | 10/812,927 | DILLON ET AL. |
| | Examiner | Art Unit |
| | Ross N. Gushi | 2833 |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-2 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-4, 11-13 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 10 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 3/3/67 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 2, 3, 9, 11, 16, 17, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Regarding claims 2, 3, 9, 11, 16, 17, and 22 the lateral stop and the detent portion are not shown in the drawings and are not described in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention (see e.g. specification at page 10, par. 0046, where the detent is mentioned, without giving any guidance as to how it would actually be configured). The limitations regarding the lateral stop and detent portion are given little weight.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless —

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in —

(1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effect under this subsection of a national

application published under section 122(b) only if the international application designating the United States was published under Article 21(2)(a) of such treaty in the English language; or

(2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that a patent shall not be deemed filed in the United States for the purposes of this subsection based on the filing of an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a);

Claims 1-5, 7-9, 11-13, and 15-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bigotto et al ("Bigotto").

Per claims 1, 2, 3, Bigotto discloses a lever-type electrical connector assembly that reduces required connecting mating forces comprising: a first connector 3 including at least one cam follower projection 21; a base housing 5 for connecting to the first connector, the base housing including a guide channel; a slide cam housing 15 mounted on the base housing and including at least one cam groove 20 and a projection guide track 29, the slide cam housing extending into the guide channel; And a cover housing 24 having a cover housing projection 27 engaged in the projection guide track, the cover housing pivotally mounted on the base housing.

Per claim 4, the length of the projection guide track is greater than the diameter of the cover housing projection.

Per claim 5, the projection guide track is linear thereby providing a substantially constant mating force as the cover housing is rotated from an unmated position to a mated position.

Per claim 7, the slide cam housing includes two opposing slide cam legs and the base housing includes two opposing guide channels such that a respective slide cam leg is received in a respective guide channel.

Per claims 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, there are at least two cam grooves formed in each of the slide cam legs of the slide cam, and the slide cam is a single-piece component.

Claims 15-19 are rejected for the reasons pertaining to claims 1-5, 7-9, 11-13.

Claims 1 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fink et al. U.S. No. 6,305,957, Ohnuki, Giro, Drescher et al., Seutschniker et al., and Sharples et al. Fink et al. U.S. No. 6,305,957, Ohnuki, Giro, Drescher et al., Seutschniker et al., and Sharples et al. each show the assembly as claimed including the first connector, base housing, slide cam housing, and cover housing as claimed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 21-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bigotto as in claims 1-5, 7-9, 11-13, and 15-19. Regarding claims 21-24, the method of locking the assembly as discussed regarding claims 1-5, 7-9, 11-13, and 15-19 would have been obvious.

Claims 6, 14, 20, 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bigotto as in claims 1, 8, 15, and 21 in view of Fink et al. U.S. No. 6,270,376 (“Fink”).

Bigotto does not state whether the connector is sealed. Fink discloses seal 28. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to include a seal on the Bigotto

assembly as taught in Fink. The suggestion or motivation for doing so would have been to prevent moisture/contamination from entering the connector, as taught in Fink and as is well known in the art.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 10 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: regarding claim 10, the prior art does not suggest the assembly as claimed, including the combination of all the claimed elements, the combination including the back wall that protects as claimed.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ross Gushi whose telephone number is (571) 272-2005. If attempts to reach the examiner by phone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula A. Bradley, can be reached at 571-272-2800 extension 33. The phone number for the Group's facsimile is (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should

you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



ROSS GUSHI
PRIMARY EXAMINER